GREAT LAKES FISHERIES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE: PARTICIPANT MOTIVATIONS, LEARNING EXPECTATIONS, AND INTENDED STEWARDSHIP ACTIONS OF A NEW EXTENSION FISHERIES LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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The National Sea Grant College Program and Michigan State University Extension require documentation of program impacts, beyond simply describing activities and participant satisfaction. In 2003-04, the Great Lakes Sea Grant Network piloted the Great Lakes Fisheries Leadership Institute (GLFLI), an adult fisheries Extension education program. This evaluation provides an analysis of program impacts most likely to occur as a result of participants' GLFLI experience. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to describe participation, participant reported program expectations and outcomes, and intended fisheries stewardship actions by Michigan participants (n=22). Results indicated that participants held diverse program expectations and intended to apply their GLFLI experience differently. Motivations for participation included values related to a specific participant cause or purpose, increased understanding about a topic, and social interaction opportunities. Program outcomes identified by participants included networking and understanding of diverse fishery stakeholders, as well as knowledge of fisheries history, biology/ecology, management, and issues. Participants were most likely to carry out stewardship actions consisting of educational activities, policy or legislative work, and/or fisheries habitat work. They sought to apply this learning mainly in local geographic and/or specific fisheries organizational community settings, but they also intended to serve as leaders in statewide, lake-wide, and Great Lakes basin-wide contexts. This evaluation establishes a baseline for comparing future mid- and long-term studies about how participants actually apply their GLFLI learning. It also provides a model by which to apply program evaluation techniques to similar Extension-based education programs with goals of developing leadership related to specific topics.